REMARKS

Dependent claims 13, 16, 32, and 42 have been canceled and their subject matter has been incorporated by amendments into the independent claims. Moreover, the limitation concerning at least one physical characteristic of a plurality of tires of a fleet present in independent claim 1 has been correspondingly incorporated by amendment into the other pending independent claims in order to clarify the invention for consistency. No new subject matter has been added by any amendment.

Applicants also wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to their representative during a telephone interview conducted on February 12, 2008, wherein the instant office action and amendment in response thereto was considered and discussed in light of the prior art.

By way of summary, Applicants' present invention involves management and analysis of fleet vehicle information, which includes tools for tracking physical tire information such as wheel and axle information. As Applicants' specification points out in paragraph [0004], "tracking tire wear and performance [for a fleet]... is of heightened importance, both from a safety and an operational cost perspective. Possibly no other single component of an over-the-road vehicle contributes as much to, and may have the greatest impact on, the operational performance, cost, and safety of the vehicle." Applicants' invention meets needs in the art for "minimize[ing] the labor required to complete vehicle tire inspections, that provides the ability to assimilate data from multiple locations, and that provides operational trend reporting and action plan generation across an entire regionally, nationally, or globally dispersed fleet." See, e.g. paragraph [0008]. Applicants' invention accordingly provides considerable usefulness and benefits to the arts of fleet tire tracking and fleet operational readiness, especially for fleets with tires located on various axle configurations corresponding to different physical use and wear pattern characteristics.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-2, 7-9, 11, 13-14, 16-24, 33-35, 37-42, and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,020,701 to Gelvin et al. ("Gelvin"). The Examiner has rejected claims 3-6. 12, 15, 25-32, 36, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as

being unpatentable over Gelvin alone or in view of what would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art. Thus, all pending claims stand rejected under either 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) or § 103(a) as either anticipated by or obvious over Gelvin.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections and request reconsideration in light of the amended claims, which are believed to overcome the Examiner's rejections and/or render the Examiner's rejections moot. Applicants assert that Gelvin fails to disclose each and every aspect of the presently pending claims, and that Gelvin further fails to render applicants' invention obvious. For instance, the Examiner has stated that Gelvin's Fig. 12 discloses an illustrated vehicle in rejecting claims 13, 16, and 32. The Examiner has rejected claim 42 based on Gelvin's disclosure of a particular report in Fig. 38A, but also presumably relies on the same Fig. 12 for the aspects of claim 42 that parallel claims 13, 16, and 32. Nonetheless, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection of these claims, since Gelvin does not fully disclose a wheel and axle configuration that allows fleet tire information to be linked to a particular tire. Nor does Gelvin describe information management concerning at least one physical characteristic of a plurality of tires obtained by direct inspection. At best, Gelvin shows a camera image that can be a vehicle (see Gelvin at Col. 13, lines 11-27) and describes a remote sensor node that can be attached to a tire (see Gelvin at Col. 44, lines 33-35). Gelvin does not disclose a way to link physical tire information obtained from direct inspection with the graphic shown because Gelvin discloses a different method directed toward remote wireless network sensors as discussed further below. Therefore Gelvin cannot anticipate Applicants' invention, since each and every element of the claimed invention must be present in the single reference and Gelvin fails to permit users to associate physical tire information to a particular tire.

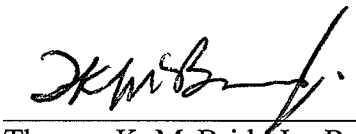
Moreover, the Examiner's reliance of ordinary skill in the art of fleet tire management and analysis does nothing to cure the deficiencies present in Gelvin with respect to the obviousness rejections, which are also respectfully traversed. In fact, Gelvin appears to teach away from Applicants' invention since Gelvin focuses on wireless integrated network sensors (WINS) that do not require any physical inspection data or user interaction to record tire information. There is simply no teaching, suggestion, or motivation present in Gelvin that would direct one of ordinary skill to consider using graphical tire and axle information to assist with

physical tire information and data. In other words, the *Graham* factual inquires show significant differences between the Gelvin prior art and the claims at issue, as well as show that one of ordinary skill in the art of tire fleet management and analysis would not be led to fill in the significant differences presented by Gelvin in applying Applicants' present invention. Finally, objective evidence indicating the nonobviousness of the present invention includes safety and operational cost benefits that users obtain through the invention when completing vehicle tire inspections and having coordinated data across various locations that can provide operational trend reporting and action plan generation across a fleet. As stated above, Applicants' invention accordingly provides considerable usefulness and benefits to the arts of fleet tire tracking and fleet operational readiness, especially for fleets with tires located on various axle configurations corresponding to different physical use and wear pattern characteristics.

Since subject matter from claims 1, 13, 16, 32, and 42 has been incorporated into all the pending claims either directly or indirectly via dependencies, the above arguments apply with equal force to each and every claim rejected by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of all rejections as to the pending claims, and the subsequent allowance of all pending claims as amended.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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